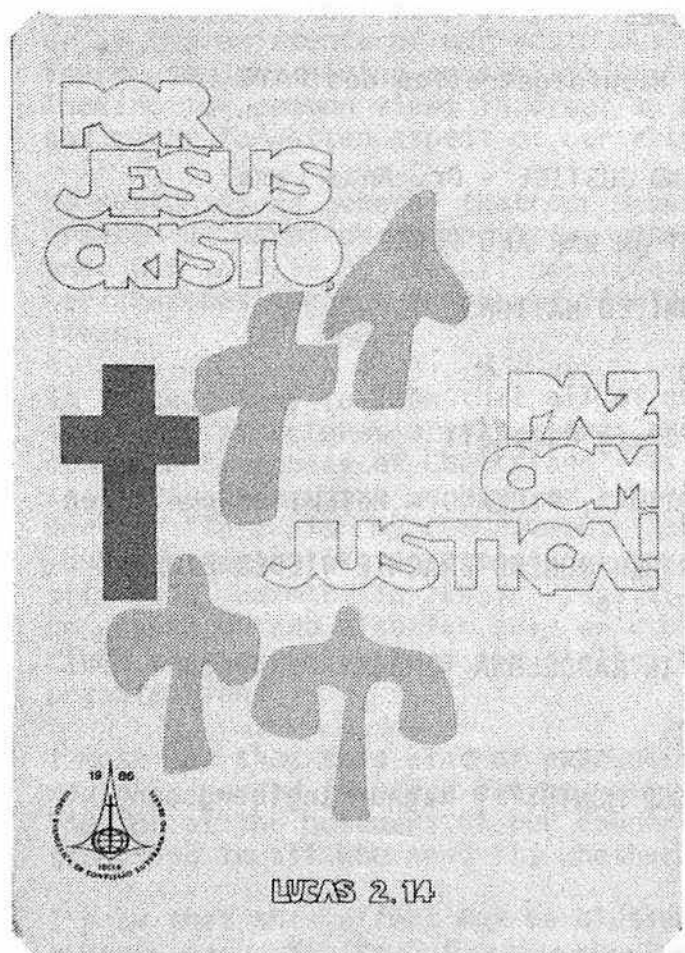


YOUTH NEWSLETTER

LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

No. 18 March 1986



THROUGH JESUS CHRIST
PEACE WITH JUSTICE
(IECLB, Brazil)

FROM THE CONTENT OF THIS ISSUE:

A Bible Study

Youth Gathering, CSSR

Taizé Meeting, Barcelona

Introduction-Youth Intern

A Satire-Youth Intern

Two contributions on peace

Six questions to the UN

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C O N T E N T S :

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Page 3	EDITORIAL - Julius Filo, Youth Coordinator
Page 4	NOTES FROM OUR DESK
Page 6	INTRODUCTION - Monika Drewes, Youth Intern
Page 8	COMMENT FROM LWF GENERAL SECRETARY
Page 8	REPORT on Youth Conference in the Central African Republic
Page 9	BIBLE STUDY - Alan Eldrid, Argentina
Page 12	WE ARE BLACK, BUT WE ARE YOUR BROTHERS - Reuben Chelliah, Malaysia
Page 14	A SATIRE - Monika Drewes
Page 15	EINE SATIRE - Monika Drewes
Page 17	BERICHT über das zweite Nachfolgetreffen des PAYG in der BRD - Udo Hahn
Page 18	YOUNG PEOPLE ON PEACE AND JUSTICE - Dr. Anza Lema
Page 20	LUTHERAN YOUTH SPEAK OUT ON WAR AND PEACE
Page 22	SIX QUESTIONS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS
Page 24	SECHS FRAGEN AN DIE UNO
Page 27	LETTER FROM A READER - Craig Campbell
Page 28	TABLE DISCUSSIONS IN KOTIMAA, FINLAND - Heikki Jääskeläinen
Page 30	DAS INTERNATIONALE JAHR DER JUGEND BRACHTE WIEDER EINMAL SEINE FRUECHTE - Julius Filo
Page 33	TAIZE EUROPEAN MEETING IN BARCELONA - Matti Peiponen
Page 35	HARDANGER MONTHS REPORT
Page 37	IMPRESSIONS OF "HARDANGER MONTHS" - Ragnar Ingibergsson
Page 39	NEWS IN BRIEF

EDITORIAL

Word of our Lord:
This is my commandment that
you love one another as I
have loved you. John 15,12

I am sure that at one time or another you have stopped in your work and asked yourself why you are doing this at all? Maybe at first you were angry that somebody was questioning your efforts, but then you agreed and asked if you really knew the value of this activity? Yes, it is worthwhile to find a clear answer to these questions!

This question could also be raised at the Youth Desk. Why do we have this LWF international youth work? Would it not be more appropriate to respond positively to a general ecumenical interest of young people in the world and support some of the ecumenical attempts, instead of doing this youth work as a part of the Lutheran World Federation? What is really the purpose of this work? What would be missing if it did not exist?

I am convinced that many of you who have been touched in one way or another by the existence of our youth desk could name some of its benefits offered to you: giving possibilities for exchange of experiences and hopes, looking for common views in order to remind our churches of some important and maybe forgotten aspect of our responsibility....

We could say in general that our work is no aim in itself. Neither do we create a structure competitive with any other confessional or ecumenical one. Our task is to use all possible means in order to strengthen our member churches through increased involvement of youth on all levels of their lives.

It is necessary to know that all of us, irregardless of our responsibility in church structures or elsewhere, are living or should be living in a concrete community of Christians - as members of our churches. This is also a situation where we have to prove that we understand and accept Jesus' words: "This is my commandment that you love one another as I have loved you". We would like to assist our young people to clearly show the intensity and warmth in their love to everybody who needs it. In the near neighborhood and also far away on other continents, our love has to include many more brothers and sisters through the perspective opened by our organization.

I must say that this kind of awareness is still not selfevident. Much more would be needed in order not to stop with our love by ourselves, our families or at the borders of our countries, but to offer it to our congregations and to all who need it, whether they are nearby or far away.

I pray that this effort may be blessed by our Lord so that we will see together many fruits of our work. One of the results of this kind of work directed to the strengthening of our young Christian love, would also be a growing will to have as many links as possible to Christians in other churches who follow the same commandment: to love one another as Jesus loved us. The more living Christian communities, the more love coming out of them, the stranger the eschatological - already growing family of God's children on earth. In this way our work can also be a contribution to a holy idea of unity of the Church of Jesus Christ.

NOTES FROM OUR DESK:

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- During March 1986 a group of 7 young members of our churches from Poland, GDR, Hungary, Tanzania, Norway and Brazil and the LWF Youth Coordinator visited Lutheran youth in 5 Asian countries. The next issue of the Youth Newsletter will bring their observations.
- A Central American Lutheran Youth Gathering with about 80 delegates is organized in Honduras March 24-29 1986. Monika Drewes, our youth intern, attends this conference on behalf of the Youth Desk. She will take part in an extended visitation program in several Latin American countries with an aim to strengthen links to the LWF youth work. The American Lutheran Church is sending two delegates to the first meeting of this kind, with a strong emphasis on the peace issue. The Youth Desk is covering 1/3 of the costs for this gathering.
- February 1 - 10, 1986 the Youth Coordinator visited the American Lutheran Church and its Luther League with several meetings in Minneapolis and the Lutheran student work in the National Lutheran Campus Ministries and the Lutheran Student Movement in Chicago as well as several congregations with important youth and social work.
- The program of the youth desk for the year 1987 was prepared for the Commission of Church Cooperation, coming together in Caracas (Venezuela) in the first week of May 1986. The study theme of the Commission meeting this year will be "Urban Mission".
- The following activities are in preparation:
 - a) a global LWF youth consultation on root causes of socio-economic injustice for October this year;
 - b) a Latin American regional youth gathering in January 1987.

Youth Internship Program

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In the year 1987 we would like to accept interns (altogether 3) preferably from Eastern Europe (so far we have no one), South America, Africa or North America (only 1 intern from each country). Each applicant should have an endorsement from the leadership of his/her church and must respond to the rules published in our Youth Newsletter, issue Nr. 16, October 1984.

The LWF Department of Studies is urgently looking for a youth intern (as usual under the age of 30) with the following qualifications:

- demonstrated ability to carry on research individually;

- background knowledge of ecumenical theology and the place of BEM in it;
- reading skill in both English and German (technical, theological language), French also desirable;
- fluency in writing English or German on the level of technical theology;
- completion of basic theological study (e.g. First Exam in Germany, M. Div. in USA);
- under 30 years of age.

to work for four to six months this year, analysing Lutheran church responses to the Lime Document, Baptism Eucharist, Ministry and preparing a report on that analysis. The work will be done in the Strasbourg Institute. An application should be sent to the Youth Desk, endorsed by the leadership of the church.

Publications

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- "The Future is Now" publication will be reprinted after a growing demand, especially from the USA and Canada;
- we can send to you free of charge the following publications, produced by the Lutheran Church of America:
 1. Youth group handbook
 2. Exciting ideas for youth ministry
 3. Helping youth grow in faith
- The American Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, 422 South Fifth Street, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55414, USA could send you the following:
 1. "Faith prayers" - youth devotions for every day of the year made by 14 youth writers
 2. "Songs for a new creation" - hymnbook for young people with 149 songs
 3. Series for leaders and groups:
 - "Decisions for life"
 - "The Image"

INTRODUCTION

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As the new youth intern of the LWF I would like to introduce myself and tell you a little about what I have been doing before coming to Geneva, what I am expecting from my half-year stay here and about my experience of the first three weeks here.

To start with: my name is Monika Drewes. I am born in Hannover in the Federal Republic of Germany. For 9 years I attended a catholic school, where there was a school service once a week - one for catholics and another small one for protestants. These services and sermons were quite boring at first. But when a young woman pastor came this changed: the weekly service became a base for experimentation and new forms of worship. We started to involve pupils more and more, had our own music (guitars and flute), instead of a sermon there could be sketches, speaking motets or biblical dance. We tried to let many of the themes and texts for the worship arise from lessons in religion or from whatever affected the children in their (school) lives. Church activities like that, and other good experiences made me hope that church might be a place of livelihood and of life even though its normal outlook is often so boring and old-fashioned, and therefore I decided to study theology and become a pastor. Now I look back on 7 years of study in several universities: Bethel, Tübingen, Basel, Jerusalem, Bern and Göttingen. I liked my studies very much but did not consider only reading and attending lectures and seminars as being study. The most important time of study was always the so-called "sparetime", the time alone, with friends, other students or professors, dreaming, discussing, and trying to find a life-style adequate to our attitudes and thoughts. I liked to do theology myself and to reflect on what it means today and I hated to be supposed to only gather knowledge about other people and former times doing their theology.

There have been three approaches for me that opened up the way for such an actual theology, which still do challenge me on the theoretical and on the practical level:

1) The first approach has been feminist theology. It is obvious that everything in theological thinking and acting must get a new shape, if women as the neglected half (not only) of the theological world, start to share their experience, faith and knowledge officially and visibly. Of course, if women look for their roots, realize their oppression and do not any more allow men to think and decide for them, it means a deep crisis for the patriarchal theology which has taken itself, by mistake, as the only possible one. But I am sure that this is only healthy...

2) My second approach has been judaistic. As a German I felt that after the holocaust it is absolutely necessary to repent, which means practically to rethink and to restructure the Jewish-Christian relationship. For me it was clear that if anti-judaism, which is a root of murder!, was an inherent part of Christianity, I could never be a pastor in that church. That is why I went to Israel to study judaism for one year.

3) Studying theology in Germany you get the impression that you are in the very center: the books to read, the theologians to know for the exams are German or Swiss. At university, it is normal to ignore all types of theol-

ogy coming along with non-universitarian language, maybe with oral traditions only. So ecumene is the third point which is able to change the only particular, one-sided theology and which puts us into new considerations. If I look at the growing churches in the "Third-World-countries", at the liberation-theologies for instance, and then at the empty churches in Germany it is obvious who has to learn from whom. Maybe Germany is still the center of church power and universitarian theology but not of spiritual life.

These three accesses made and make theology fascinating for me, and I tell you about them because they are challenges to my way of life and spirituality, and as I think a hope for the church of Christ.

Now here in Geneva, I hope to enlarge my knowledge and experience about ecumene. I would like to learn what it means to be a Lutheran Christian from the FRG in this world of unjust structures within the ecumenical movement and especially what it means for my future engagement in a congregation or a community. How can we become aware of our sinful involvement in, for example, unjust world-trade-relationships that affect our every day shopping and living? If we imagine all the worlds' Christians participating in the Holy Supper at ONE table, is not Paul in 1. Corinthians blaming us then, the well-fed people, to be unworthily participating next to the starving sisters and brothers? How can we convert ourselves from sinful economic - and power - structures that we do often respect more than God, who wants to liberate and unite us?

I thought a WORLD-Federation would be a good place to ask these questions, and ask them as a member of a Lutheran church (even though of course they go beyond denominations and church-barriers) - and also find answers and help. So I was very disappointed when I noticed that the LWF still did not withdraw its funds from banks that are deeply involved in South Africa. That meant to me, that even in a case where the involvement in a sinful system is so obvious, the process of answering the challenge is painfully slow. I think the LWF (including me as a member) still has to learn a lot about how to follow Christ in this essential respect.

In many other regards I can surely learn a lot in the time of my internship: There are so many nice people around me, working in an office is new for me, and with the task to prepare a youth gathering in Latin America, I am very happy. I will also share in the women's desk for some time, join a conference in Caracas and many other interesting things. And besides learning, maybe I can share some of my abilities, my critics and my hopes for our church.

Working at the Youth Desk now, I will hopefully do a good job in advocacy for the youth and for everyone who needs a real participatory church now and in future.

Monika Drewes
LWF Youth Intern



COMMENT FROM LWF GENERAL SECRETARY

The Youth Desk approached the General Secretary of the LWF for information on the LWF strategy in dealing with banks involved in South Africa. Here is the comment we received from him:

"Our banking relations have been under constant review. When I took office last September, I requested a new scrutiny of the matter. A letter from me to all banks with which we are dealing, has now been responded to by all except two. For the majority of these banks, it is clear that they are clean on South Africa. In the case of two or three we are asking expert advice from the United Nations office that monitors bank relations to the apartheid system. As soon as we have all the facts and comments on the table a decision will be made on the basis of our criteria for which banks to use. We are also checking our criteria against those defined by the World Council of Churches to be sure that there is a joint ecumenical position".

Gunnar Staalsett

R E P O R T

On the General Conference of the Youth in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Baboua, Central African Republic, September 4 - 8, 1985

Our movement, the youth of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Central African Republic, JECA, has, after their youth camp which took place in August 1984 in Baboua, met again in Besson for a General Conference on the theme: "We are the children of God". See John 1,12: "But all those who received him, to those who believe in his name, he has given the power to become children of God".

This conference was chaired by Mamang Marcus, Evangelist of the Synod of JECA. We were assisted by five pastors: Mr. Barbou Elie, vice-president of our Church, Pastor Peter Lodoen, technical adviser of the JECA, Ndofe Nathaniel, Director of Na-Ba-Sa, Gourou Henri, Director of the Baboua district and Pastor Dombia David, Director of the Besson district, who have taken turns in holding bible studies and participating in different committees.

We also have to tell you about the presence of our Adviser Ms. Boursa Rebecca, vice-president of the women for Christ. Six districts took part: Baboua, Besson, Ngula-Bouar, Bouar, Fe and Fambele. The number of participants of the conference was 201 and the amount received at the church offering was Frs. 10.110. Bearing in mind the wish, expressed by the directors of the JECA, the old office has been dissolved and a new office was elected.

On Saturday the 7th all the young people spent a whole day in the bush where they cultivated a field of 4000 m². This field is a donation of all speakers to the youth of Besson. From now on for every such conference, the JECA will go on with this kind of work in every district which will invite the coming conferences with the theme: "Got to all the world and proclaim the good news". The conference was finished on Sunday, September 8 at 12.00 with the Holy Supper.

BIBLE STUDY: Jeremiah 1:4-10 Luke 1:26-38 1 Timothy 4:11 - 5:2
by Alan Eldrid, Argentina

This Bible Study has been prepared to be used by youth groups. It can also be used by individuals, but in this case the enrichment which comes from community work would be lost. For individual use we recommend to follow point 6b (questions for reflection) instead of point 6a. There should not be more than 7 or less than 3 people in a working group. If the group is larger than 7 it must be divided into smaller groups to allow everyone to speak. Though we propose the following way of working, the group leader must feel free to choose the dynamics he/she considers more suitable.

Working proposal:

- 1) Each person will read the passages, indicating every element or sentence that calls his/her attention, marking it with a sign (!) and every element or sentence that he/she does not understand or brings questions to his/her mind with the sign (?).
- 2) The group leader shall write down on a big sheet of paper or a blackboard all the elements marked with the (!) sign and on another sheet or part of the blackboard the elements marked (?). It is very important for this exercise that everyone should be able to see these lists. This simple exercise makes clear to everyone which are their interests and doubts as a group and not only as individuals.
- 3) Each group member shall read the following text analysis, paying special attention to elements that could help to clear or complete the group interests found in point 2.

Text analysis: Jeremiah 1:4-10

Analysis of the 'figures' that appear in the passage:

"young man" (youth) This is not an obstacle for being a prophet. For all abilities come from God.

Prophet The prophet has the authority that comes from God's Word. It is a calling to mission, denouncing injustice and proclaiming the Kingdom that comes.

God's presence God acts by means of his Word. He is the one who can give or not the gift of prophesy.

Jeremiah Jeremiah is a person, but also a figure, because there are many more elements linked to his name. It is presupposed that being young is an obstacle for being a prophet. God's Word destroys these cultural and ideological presuppositions pointing out that all gifts come from Him and not from the amount of years or experience a person has.

'adversary' This figure does not come forth in a clear way, but it brings together all the elements against God's intention. Jeremiah himself is part of this figure formed by habits and traditions that do not allow the ideas of "prophet" and "young person" to go together. (Jeremiah is part of his culture as we are part of

our own). God himself shows this presuppositions as false. He demands us to deny these false habits and customs, giving us his Word and Presence as guarantee. Jeremiah must deny his cultural presuppositions, he must deny himself as part of his culture. (Remember Jesus' words: "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me) - Matthew 16:24.

Text analysis: Luke 1:26-38

Analysis of the figure that appear in this passage:

Mary A young woman. According to Luther's comment on the 'Magnificat' Mary is a despised, humble, unimportant woman. Nevertheless, she is chosen by God to become his Son's Mother.

Elisabeth She is an old and rejected woman. She has been rejected by others, called barren by her neighbors. Anyhow, she is chosen by God to become John the Baptist's Mother.

Both women suffer/will suffer because of the cultural presuppositions of the society in which they live. Mary will become mother and her 'legal' husband is not the child's father. Elisabeth despises herself and is despised by others because of her barrenness. God breaks into this situation by means of his Word. Word of power and authority.

Both Mary and Elisabeth accept the Good News that comes from God. Therefore, Mary says a psalm, the 'Magnificat' (Luke 1:46-55) and Zacharias (Elisabeth's husband) says another psalm, the 'Benedictus' (Luke 1:68-79). It is important to look over these psalms to get an idea of the feeling behind the passages.

Text analysis: 1 Timothy 4:11 - 5:2

Timothy reminds us somehow of the young prophet Jeremiah, because despite his youth, he has been called by God for a responsibility, for a ministry in the community.

God calls and gathers. Youngsters, children and aged are part of 'his people'. It is not necessary to be an 'adult' or an 'expert' to be part of God's community and to share the responsibilities.

God does not set his eyes on those who 'seem' important (because of money, age, race or nationality) on the contrary, he sets eyes upon those who seem to be unimportant; for instance, Timothy or Jeremiah. The same goes for Mary and Elisabeth. The cultural and religious background considered young people as 'almost-people'. Youth was not considered relevant or important enough to become part of the chosen ministry.

God breaks the expert's wisdom, because faith and ethical behaviour are the criteria for His calling. Timothy does not become arrogant and full of his own importance because of the calling, on the contrary, he enters the service of God's Kingdom which is revealing itself among us.

- 4) Read the passages again marking any differences with the original indications. Use the signs (!) and (?) as in point 1.
- 5) Report to the group any changes between this analysis and the first one. Explain your reasons.
- 6) Choose one of the following possibilities:
 - A) Discuss the results you have reached as a group, observing what these elements mean for us as a group, as individual persons and how these elements fit into the whole Bible Study. Which is our group commitment towards these elements?
 - B) In the light of your group analysis:
 - 1.- Does the role of youth appear as a future fact?
 - 2.- If God himself is against the false traditions and chooses those who are oppressed by these traditions and not those who support these false structures; what kind of group are we? Are we among the oppressed by these traditions or are we among those who keep them and destroy God's Word?
 - 3.- Which is the role of youth in church and society, taking into account that we cannot understand one without the other?
 - 4.- How does our role become real for us nowadays in our particular situations?
 - 5.- Are we ready to assume a concrete commitment as a group towards the role which God calls us? Which is this commitment?

This Bible Study is the result of the work of the Lutheran students at the Ecumenical Seminary in Argentina (I.S.E.D.E.T.) We would be very grateful if you could share any results with us. Please send them to:

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'Cuerpo de Estudiantes Luteranos'
a/c Sr. Walter Oliva Proazzi
Camacua 282
1406 BUENOS AIRES
Argentina

WE ARE BLACK, BUT WE ARE YOUR BROTHERS

by Reuben Chelliah, Malaysia

There is a lot that does not speak much for the good in Christian history. Time and again, atrocities have been done in the name of religion, and the Blessed Name of CHRIST has always been disgraced. Colonialism was a terror, but in these modern days, racial discrimination is an abomination. One evil has left, but another takes its place.

Racial discrimination is not a new evil in human history. It is as old as the earth. But such an evil becomes more evil if it is still practiced in this 20th century.

One cannot imagine that in this modern, civilized world, one race maintains 'superiority' over the others, and that the superiority is not based on intelligence or ability, but on mere color of skin.

Using the just name of CHRIST, the white race claims superiority over the colored. From where they got this notion, is a puzzle to me. Perhaps it is the reflection of a childlike belief that the good angel is all white and the devil is all black. In the small mind of the human race lingers the primeval belief that black is bad and thus black is inferior.

There is racial discrimination between the colored themselves, there is no doubt, but that shall be dealt with in another essay. But when the discrimination is between the opposite colors of black and white, the gap between humanity becomes ever so wide.

No amount of works of reparation can dry the giant pools of tears that the discriminated have cried. No amount of words can heal the wounds thrust into the universal human soul, where racial barriers are concerned.

But every little step done today and now, to correct this evil is a mammoth step forward to human unity and human dignity.

I have always wondered why the great world Christian leaders and the great world Christian organizations have been silent on these issues of utmost importance.

You can imagine my joy when I read the newspapers one day. The church had finally decided to listen to the voice of GOD. The church had finally decided to do what GOD has always intended it to do - speak out and fight against all manner of evil. In this case, it is the evil of racial discrimination.

The Lutheran Churches which met in Budapest, Hungary, took a decision to expel two Lutheran 'churches' from membership of the LWF (Lutheran World Federation). These two churches were from Africa, and both practiced apartheid. White people meet in these churches and white people only to worship the Son of GOD. Black people could not join worship with them.

Now Lutherans the world over refuse to recognize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Africa and the German Evangelical Lutheran Church in S.W. Africa or Namibia, as fellow Lutherans and in the ultimate, as fellow-Christians, for no fellow Christian-church would practice racial discrimination. Such churches are a shame to the Universal Church and are agents of darkness.

We Christians, in the Third World are seen as members of a religion of the colonial past and now we are seen as believers in a religion that 'advocates' white supremacy. We find it hard to say 'In CHRIST, there is no Greek or Jew, or Gentile; no slave or masters' - as there are white churches which teach otherwise. If such an evil practice can only be wiped off the face of the earth, the gospel will have more credibility in the East and the gospel is necessary for us even as it is necessary for all people.

And it is in the gospel that we learn, we black and colored, that we are equal to the whites in the sight of GOD. CHRIST makes no distinction, CHRIST loves the red, yellow, black and white. And we want our people to know this. We want all white men who bring shame to the gospel either to turn from their evil ways or to be reminded that they are not Christians if they continue racial discrimination.

Please, my white brothers, CHRIST is speaking to me, and what HE wants me to say to you is this:



"WE MAY BE BLACK, BUT WE ARE YOUR BROTHERS"

A SATIRE

=====

By Monika Drewes

There exists a caricature of feminist theology, which is meant to easily identify her as stupidity. This caricature sounds like this: "Feminist theology does no longer only want to address God as our Father but as our Mother".

Of course it is not as easy as that. On the contrary, it can even be very complicated to explain the problems that some have with our picture of God as a Father. That is because pictures and ways of expression became so "obvious and natural" during 2000 years of tradition that nobody would ever consider himself as being against women by belonging to this tradition.

In order to explain the background of feminist theology despite of these problems I choose the stylistic means of satire. My satire proceeds from the idea that we just have to face the problems from the other side: men are about to fight for their emancipation:

About my problems with the "Our Mother"

Most of you will probably not understand if I admit that the "Our Mother" is a big problem for me. Everybody is used to praying to "Our Mother" and in all our prayers during all our life GODESS, our Mother, became the embodiment of all positive values. We have learned not to impute to Her the weak points of our own imperfect mothers. Besides, in theology it is generally accepted that Goddess is not of female sex. Does She not after all bear some fatherly characteristics? Sometimes it can even happen that it is said about Her that She is like a father. Many say this proves that neither our faith nor our prayer are feministical or matriarchal: no, our addressing Goddess in the way we are used to has nothing to do with any preference of disadvantage for reasons of sex.

In this regard I am sceptical. Of course, our mothers and fore-mothers have been serious and dignified women. They lived in a society ruled and determined by women and enjoyed all possible honors. That is why it is only understandable that they did also clothe their experiences and their knowledge about Goddess into the most accepted and dignified words. And who was more dignified in terms of society than the mother, the mother of a family as well as the mother of a country? Out of the matriarchal structure of society it is easy to understand the language and also the addressing to Goddess.

But now this language and these ideas have conserved the society that brought them forth. Or would you ever consider the fact that men do normally only have the lower positions in church and society as a natural order of creation? Sometimes I think men's lower rank in hierarchy is still - maybe unconsciously - legitimated by the old story about Eve and Adam. It says that Eve has been created first and Adam has been the one to be seduced by the snake, bearing responsibility for the fall. Did men not believe, did they not experience Goddess, did they not think and pray through all the ages? But yet how few testimonies do we have about that!

Theology has been reserved to women only, to the church mothers and the old protestant mothers and even today you will find very few churches ordinating men. How few are the men being professors at a university!

It is widely known that men have not as much creativity, birth giving power as women have - and of course the Goddess even more. All differences in regard to the position in Goddess Queendom are only a result of this fact and have (by the way) nothing to do with discrimination: everyone according to her gifts!

But also men are allowed to take their place in the covenant of sisterhood and may consider themselves as maids of Goddess. It is true, that there is nowadays a strong demand for inclusive language, but for most of the sisters it remains strange how men can be so pedantic: It depends only on the definition: sister sometimes means more than sister!

But now I want to advocate for the brothers. Too long already we have caught Goddess in Her picture: "Mother" maybe with some male attributes but never "Father". The typical female experiences, such as creativity and power and love are ascribed to Her and are therefore even closer connected with the word "mother". But why should this not also be male characteristics? Today, men are fighting to achieve emancipation and I think we have come to a point where we should reconsider our old role-patterns and break them up in order to let women and men learn anew what it means to be a human being. Yes, and also in order to have new encounters with Goddess and to put away for a while all the consequences of Her being fixed to the one picture (idol). We will have to invent new names, we have to be open again for Her and then try to express it.

I know, it will not be easy. And we will surely have to fight for our new openness, for being addressed by Goddess and addressing Her. Of course, we are definitely not helped by just turning the tables and starting to pray from now on:

"Our Father in heaven...."

EINE SATIRE

=====

von Monika Drewes

Es gibt eine Karikatur der Feministischen Theologie, die es leicht machen soll, sie als eine Dummheit abzutun. Diese Karikatur lautet so: "Die Feministische Theologie will doch bloss, dass wir jetzt Gott unsere Mutter nennen und nicht mehr unsem Vater".

So einfach ist das natürlich nicht. Es ist sogar recht schwierig, die Probleme, die inzwischen einige Menschen mit dem Gottesbild "Vater" haben, zu erklären. Bilder und Ausdrucksweise sind so selbstverständlich nach 2000 Jahren Tradition, dass es mich nicht wundert, dass viele nicht verstehen, was diese Feministische Theologie eigentlich für Probleme hat. "Wir sind doch alle dafür, dass die Frauen nicht unterdrückt werden!" Um dennoch eine Erklärung zu versuchen, habe ich das Mittel der Satire gewählt, einer Satire, die davon ausgeht, dass wir gerade vor dem umgekehrten Problem stehen und die Männer gerade um ihre Emanzipation kämpfen:

Zu meinen Schwierigkeiten mit den "Mutter Unser"

Die meisten von euch werden nicht verstehen, wenn ich einfach so sage: Das Mutter-Unser bereitet mir Schwierigkeiten. Wir beten es einfach immer so. Und in allen unseren Gebeten ist doch Göttin, unsere Mutter, längst der Inbegriff alles Positiven. Wir haben gelernt, dass wir Ihr nicht die Schwächen unserer doch manchmal unvollkommenen Mutter zurechnen. Und es ist auch in der Theologie weithin anerkannt, dass Göttin nicht weiblichen Geschlechts ist. Schliesslich, trägt Sie nicht auch ein paar väterliche Züge? Und es kommt sogar vor, dass von Ihr gesagt wird, Sie sei WIE ein Vater. Viele sagen, dass das der Beweis dafür sei, dass weder unser Glaube noch unser Gebet feministisch oder matriarchalisch sei: nein, die Anrede an Göttin hat nichts mit irgendeiner geschlechtlichen Bevorzugung oder Benachteiligung zu tun.

Ich bin da skeptisch. Natürlich waren unsere Mütter und Vormütter ernstzunehmende Frauen. Sie lebten in einer von Frauen bestimmten Gesellschaft und genossen die höchsten Ehren. Da ist es nur verständlich, dass sie auch ihre Erlebnisse mit Göttin und ihre Erkenntnisse in die anerkanntesten gewichtigsten Begriffe und Bilder kleideten. Und wer war gesellschaftlich anerkannter als die Mütter, die Familienmütter, die Landesmütter? Und so kam es, dass sie auch sagten "Unsere Mutter im Himmel". Aus der matriarchalischen Gesellschaftsordnung ist die Sprache und auch die Anrede an Göttin nur zu verständlich. Doch nun hat diese Sprache und diese Vorstellung wiederum die Gesellschaft konserviert. Oder sollte es sich etwa doch um eine natürliche Schöpfungsordnung handeln, wenn Männer ihr Platz in der Kirche und im Staat nur immer auf den unteren Rängen zugewiesen wurde, und wird? (z.B. mit Hilfe der alten Geschichte von Eva und Adam, die erklärt, dass Eva eben zuerst da war und Adam sich schliesslich von der Schlange verführen liess und die Schuld am ganzen Schlamassel des Sündenfalls trägt...) Haben Männer all die Jahrhunderte hindurch nicht geglaubt, nicht Göttin erlebt, nicht gedacht und nicht gebetet? Aber ach, wie wenige Zeugnisse gibt es davon!

Die Theologie war allein den Kirchenmüttern und Altprotestantischen Müttern vorbehalten und selbst heute noch gibt es erst sehr wenige Kirchen, die überhaupt Männer ordinieren! Wie wenige Männer sind Professorinnen an der Universität? Den Männern fehlt, wie allgemein behauptet wird, einfach die schöpferische Kraft, die Frauen nun einmal zu eigen ist und daraus resultieren alle Unterschiede in der Stellung in Göttins Reich, die im übrigen nichts mit Diskriminierung zu tun haben! JEDE IHREN GABEN GEMAESS!

Auch die Männer dürfen sich einreihen in den Bund der Schwesterlichkeit und sich als Mägde der Göttin fühlen. Eine Umwandlung der Sprache, also z.B. von Geschwisterlichkeit zu reden, liegt zwar auf der Linie eines neuen Trends, aber eigentlich bleibt es den meisten Schwestern unverständlich, wie Männer so kleinlich sein können, denn es kommt doch auf die Definition an: Schwester heisst eben mehr als Schwester!

Doch ich will ein gutes Wort für die Brüder einlegen. Zu lange haben wir schon Göttin in Ihrem Bild gefangen "Mutter", vielleicht auch mit väterlichen Zügen, aber eben niemals "Vater". Die typisch weiblichen Erfahrungen und Eigenschaften von Schöpferinnenkraft und Macht und Liebe werden Ihr zugeschrieben. Jetzt, wo der Mann um seine Emanzipation kämpft, scheint es an der Zeit, neu darüber nachzudenken, wie die alten Rollenbilder aufgebrochen werden können, damit sich Männer und Frauen neu als Menschen kennenlernen können.

Ja, auch um der Göttin neu zu begegnen und all die Folgen in den Gesellschaften, die ihre Festlegung auf dieses Bild hatte, einmal abzustreifen, tut es not, neue Namen zu erfinden, noch einmal ganz neu sich auf sie einzulassen, und Worte dafür zu finden. Ich weiss, dass das nicht einfach sein wird, und wir werden um unsere Offenheit für die neue Ansprache der Göttin wohl kämpfen müssen. Denn es ist uns sicher nicht gedient, wenn wir jetzt einfach den Spiess umdrehen und von nun an beten würden

"Unser Vater im Himmel"

B E R I C H T

Über das zweite Nachfolgetreffen des PAYG in der BRD
von Udo Hahn

Hedemünde b. Göttingen - Bei einer zweiten Auswertungstagung von Teilnehmern an der Jugendvorkonferenz und Vollversammlung des Lutherischen Weltbundes (LWB) 1984 in Budapest sowie bundesdeutschen Jugendvertretern in der Weltbund-Kommissionen und Ausschüssen hat sich jetzt aus diesen Reihen mit Zustimmung des Deutschen Nationalkomitees (DNK/LWB) und seiner Gliedkirchen erstmals ein "Jugendausschuss" gebildet.

Wie aus dem Ergebnispapier der Tagung hervorgeht, versteht sich dieser Ausschuss als Gegenüber zum DNK/LWB sowie zum Jugendreferat des Weltbundes in Genf. Gleichzeitig sehen sich die Jugendvertreter an der "ökumenischen Aufgabe" der lutherischen Landeskirchen in der Bundesrepublik beteiligt und wollen sich verstärkt für "ökumenische Bewusstseinsbildung" einsetzen. Hinsichtlich der Arbeitsschwerpunkte will man an Themen der Budapester Jugendkonferenz wie "Die Rolle der Jugend in Kirche und Gesellschaft" und "Christliches Zeugnis" anknüpfen. Schliesslich ist daran gedacht, dass sich der Ausschuss an der Auswahl und Vorbereitung von Jugenddelegierten an der nächsten Jugendvorkonferenz und LWB-Vollversammlung beteiligt und durch Öffentlichkeitsarbeit solche Treffen bekannter machen will.

Gleichzeitig wurde in einer Grussadresse Julius Filo vom Genfer Weltbund-Jugendreferat eine grundsätzliche Unterstützung und die Bereitschaft zur Mitarbeit durch den neu gebildeten Jugendausschuss zugesagt. Schliesslich wurde Julius Filo ermuntert, die begonnene Zusammenarbeit mit dem Jugendreferat des Ökumenischen Rates der Kirchen (OeRK) fortzusetzen.

Superintendent Käte Mahn (Göttingen), bundesdeutsche Vertreterin im Exekutivkomitee des LWB und ab 1. April Geschäftsführerin des DNK, hob bei der Tagung hervor, es sei von grosser Bedeutung, dass bei der Vollversammlung in Budapest die Frauenproblematik und Jugendarbeit besonders ins Bewusstsein des LWB gerückt wurden und die Bereitschaft gewachsen ist, Absichtserklärungen nun auch in die Tat umzusetzen und bestimmte Arbeitsfelder stärker als bisher zu fördern.

Dem "DNK/LWB-Jugendausschuss", der sich zweimal pro Jahr treffen will und sich aus Vertretern aller lutherischer Landeskirchen zusammensetzt, gehören augenblicklich Sabine Rüdiger-Hahn (Bayern), Sabine Nabrotzky (Nordelbien), Susanne Adamczewski (Nordelbien), Uwe Arnhold (Hannover), Harald Welge (Braunschweig) an.

YOUNG PEOPLE ON PEACE AND JUSTICE

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In this International Year of Peace we would like to share with you the conclusions drawn from a survey made by Dr. Anza Lema, Associate General Secretary of the LWF in Geneva with the theme "Young People on Peace and Justice". This study of 40 pages (which can be obtained from the General Secretariat) is the result of a survey made among the young members of our Evangelical churches.

CONCLUSION

From the brief analysis of the responses given by the young people, we can draw a number of conclusions.

There is no question that young people are every bit as concerned about worldwide peace and justice as adults are. With most of their lives still before them, they feel they have more at stake than the older generation. The future seems bleak to them because the powers that be seem insensitive to their needs, and they are seldom involved in discussion of the crucial issues which affect their future. This leaves them with a feeling of hopelessness.

They expressed disquiet at the way Assembly discussions were handled, for various reasons. For instance, they felt that some voices had a better chance of being heard than others. Sometimes people were left perplexed and had trouble following what was going on because of the way the proceedings were managed. The Northern traditions of debate were in operation, ruling out other approaches, and leaving those who were unfamiliar with these rules at a disadvantage. Moreover, the fact that the debates were conducted in English, German or French made full participation difficult for those of other mother tongues.

Some thought that there were important world peace issues which were not dealt with, because they did not happen to concern the majority at the Assembly, the people with the power to decide what was raised and what was ignored. Yet most of the young people believed that the Statement of Peace and Justice represented a step in the right direction, provided it was followed by appropriate action.

Many young people expressed disappointment at the way the Assembly Statement seemed to ignore the views voiced by the young people at their pre-assembly gathering. It was as if what they had said carried no weight. It has been suggested that part of the reason for this was that the pre-assembly gathering was too close timewise to the Assembly proper; it is hoped that any future statement from a youth gathering might have more influence on the next assembly if time were allowed for the churches to reflect on it beforehand.

Like the adults at the Assembly, the young people are divided on the question of whether "peace" and "justice" constitute a single issue or whether they can be seen separately. However, there seems to be more understanding among the young of the fundamental interrelatedness of the two. Such issues as unemployment, racism, sexism and oppression are seen as contributing directly to the lack of peace. On the other hand, it is clear that

their views are often strongly influenced by those of their elders. Some find it difficult to form their own opinions on such matters as armaments and how they affect peace and justice. The tendency of many seems to be to go along with what they have heard or read.

It is surprising to see how the divergence of public opinion between East and West has influenced youth. There is a tendency for those from the North Atlantic countries to feel sorry for their counterparts in Eastern countries, and even to assume the role of advocates for them. Yet it is interesting to note that it is the group from East Europe, representing the Christian minority, who seem to show greater understanding of the social, political and economic problems of the Southern hemisphere. The young people from Eastern Europe expressed greater sensitivity regarding the plight of the blacks in South Africa and the oppressed in Central America.

Youth expects a lot from the churches. Criticism of church inaction abounds; they point out that some churches do not involve themselves in the problems of the societies in which they live. There was also disappointment at the lack of response to International Youth Year. Their expectations regarding the initiatives that the LWF might take in the fields of human rights, social issues, development and mission, to name only a few, show clearly the sort of international role they would like the Federation to play.

Many of the responses show that today's young people are idealistic, as are the youth of every generation. They, like their parents before them, hope for quick solutions. They, like their grandparents still earlier, are impatient with the slow pace of change in their societies and churches. They hope for a better future. Will their idealism and exuberance last? Will they usher in a new society in the next generation?

Past experience might lead us to give a pessimistic answer, but let us remember two facts which distinguish the present generation of youth from those of the past. One is the fact that they are in a position to be far better informed about international affairs than past generations ever were. Modern fast communications mean that many of them see other parts of the world, and can experience a little of the conditions in which other live, at first hand. Even those who do not have an opportunity to travel themselves may have opportunities to meet their counterparts from other regions who visit their home countries. All can have news brought before them at great speed and with a new immediacy through the media, something undreamed of in earlier generations.

The second fact, which affects the present generation in a unique way, is the prospect, never before so threatening, that the whole world as we know it could be on the verge of cataclysmic destruction. This brings an urgency which past generations have not experienced. We cannot doubt that young people have been able to influence their societies in the past; even during the past twenty years some changes have certainly been achieved in certain areas through the agitation of large sections of the community, mainly young, and it is not too unrealistic to hope that this trend will continue. The threats to peace and justice throughout the world keep alive their vision and idealism in a way that earlier generations have failed to do; they must constantly challenge those with influence; it is their task to help ensure that the changes which will certainly come will lead to a more secure and a more just world for themselves and for their children.

In the International Year of Peace we bring to you one testimony on peace and war:

LUTHERAN YOUTH SPEAK OUT ON WAR AND PEACE

(Already appeared in "Lutheran PEACE Fellowship" on August 19, 1985)

Do we need to threaten to use our nuclear weapons against the Soviet Union? According to a recent sampling of Lutheran young people, 84% say no! About the same number believe that "spending more money on weapons and war means that we spend less on taking care of the poor and the hungry."

These responses came from participants in this summer's American Lutheran Church (ALC) Youth Gathering in Denver, Colorado where hundreds of young people were given the opportunity to express their attitudes about living in the nuclear age through a "peace/war survey." Over 700 youth and youth leaders answered the 11 question survey which was taken by the Lutheran Peace Fellowship.

Of those polled, only 28% think that a "strong U.S. military policy is a good way to keep peace in the world." 57% disagree. 15% aren't sure.

For most of these young people, the peace question is not one which the church should ignore. Over 70% say the church should advocate disarmament and need not support the government's current defense policies. 82% believe that working in the peace movement is part of proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. An even higher percentage (87%) believes that the commandment to love ones enemies applies to nations and social structures as well as to individuals.

When it came to more specific questions about participation in war, the answers were less clear cut, but still 65% said they could never support the use of nuclear weapons. This is consistent with the ALC's 1983 declaration that "any use of weapons of mass destruction is immoral on the basis of the criteria for waging of just war." Just over half of the youth surveyed (51%) went on to say that "it is immoral to build nuclear weapons." (26% disagreed; 23% were not sure).

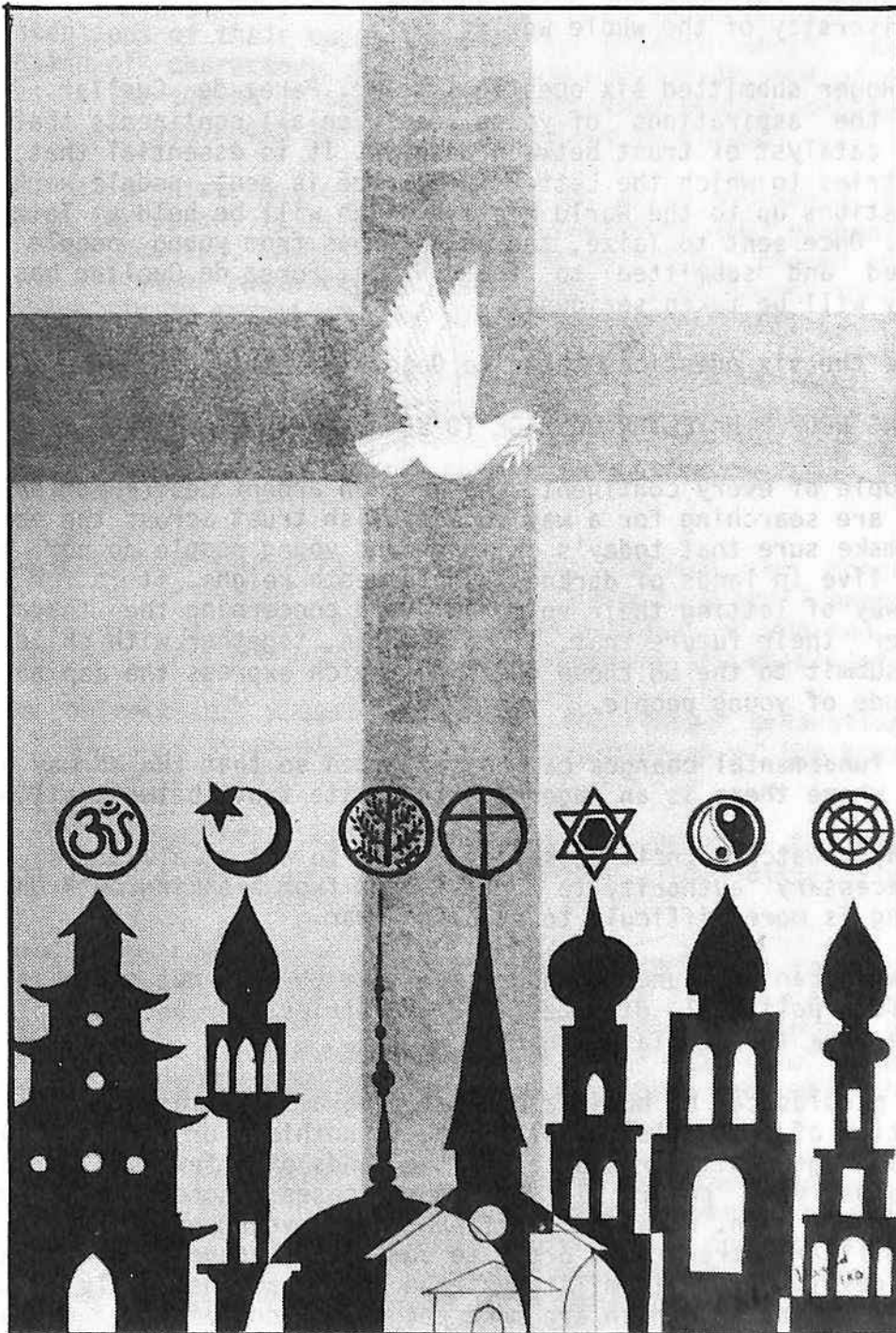
Only 26% of those polled said that, if necessary, they would be willing to fight in any war the United States declared. 54% disagreed; 20% were not sure. 47% believe that in the nuclear age there is no such thing as a justifiable war in which Christians can participate. 31% disagreed. 22% were not sure.

Worth noting is the obvious differences in responses of males and females. In the survey results, females were generally more opposed to modern war than males. Males were less willing to renounce the use of nuclear weapons (57% of the males said no to use, while 72% of the women said the same), and more willing to fight in any war the United States declared (38%, as opposed to only 15% of the females). And while 39% of the men believe the "atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was justified because it shortened the war," only 12% of the women were willing to agree with that statement.

Males were also less likely than females to answer survey questions with "No opinion" or "Not sure".

Peace/war questions were raised in other areas of the Denver youth gathering. At "The Habitat" exhibition hall, young people folded origami peace cranes, helped to make a "peace ribbon," and wrote post cards to President

Reagan and Soviet President Gorbachev urging them to work for world peace. Counseling was provided for young people struggling with questions about draft registration and conscientious objection. At the gathering's final evening event called "Peace for All Nations," ALC President David Preus reminded participants that just as "Jesus Christ is our peace," he has called us to be peacemakers.



CHILDREN'S DRAWING

(photo WCC)

SIX QUESTIONS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS

An article from the "Letter from Taizé" - January-February 1986

On July 2nd 1985 Brother Roger (Prior of the Taizé Brothers) accompanied by seven children, one a five-month old baby, went to Geneva to meet the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Being of Indian, Colombian, African, Lebanese, European and Moroccan-Muslim origins, the children reflected the diversity of the whole world.

Brother Roger submitted six questions to Mr. Perez de Cuellar. They expressed the aspirations of young people on all continents that the U.N. become a catalyst of trust between peoples. It is essential that, in the 130 countries to which the Letter from Taizé is sent, people work on these six questions up to the World Meeting which will be held at Taizé in summer 1987. Once sent to Taizé, the suggestions from young people will be summarized and submitted to the U.N. Mr. Perez de Cuellar has promised that they will be taken seriously.

These are the six questions taken to Geneva by Brother Roger:

WILL YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE THE COURAGE TO BE AMBASSADORS OF TRUST?

Young people of every continent, who bear an ardent desire for peace within them, are searching for a way to establish trust across the earth. They want to make sure that today's children and young people do not, one day, have to live in lands of darkness where death reigns. It is for those who have no way of letting their voice be heard concerning the threats which hang over their future that, I, an old man, together with children, have come to submit to the UN these questions which express the aspirations of a multitude of young people.

1. What fundamental changes can be suggested so that the UN may become a place where there is an eagerness to create trust between all peoples?

How may a watch council be set up, ready to act at all times and with the necessary authority to prevent wars from breaking out? Once begun, nothing is more difficult to stop than war.

What ways can be found to ensure that the UN does not serve as a platform for political disputes and rivalries, nor become a place where people seek to humiliate others?

Whole peoples can be humiliated when programs that aim at a fairer distribution of the world's wealth come to nothing, or when the concentration of huge capital resources in the hands of a few gives individuals or groups vast power. In both these cases, those who are humiliated seek to get even. Humiliation often leads governments to build up enormous military strength in order to compel the respect of others. The rapid developments in military technology lead inevitably to the manufacture of weapons which are more and more economically ruinous. The tightening noose of spiraling expenditure which is thereby caused exhausts the resources which are so badly needed by all peoples.

2. What guarantees can national leaders give that they will not abuse the confidence of peoples? Establishing trust throughout the earth requires clear-sightedness, a clear-sightedness that knows that trust can also be misused.

What changes can be suggested to every member nation of the UN, so that all prestige-spending be abandoned and these resources diverted to more important needs, especially the needs of those who live in poverty? In addition, will all those in positions of political authority decide once and for all to refuse any cult of their personality and all means of domination?

Many of the young are tired of the attacks by which politicians distort the intentions of their opposite numbers, attacks which can include defamation of character, and sometimes brutality. One of the consequences is the sowing of scepticism among young people, making many of them lose all eagerness to look for creative solutions.

3. An equitable distribution of material wealth in the world is one precondition for peace. It is essential to recognise new economic rights which cover housing, health, and adequate nutrition, placed on the same level as all other human rights. These rights presupposes that personal initiative can be exercised, but within established limits.
4. The fact that science and technology can be used to destroy a whole section of humanity fuels a violent crisis of trust. Nations begin to be frightened of one another, and political leaders are not exempt from this fear. It results in people turning in upon themselves, their creativity frozen by fright.

Yet all peoples desire peace, and not war, torture, or concentration camps. It is true that in every nation there is a small proportion of people who wish to impose an expansionist process, or who can, if they hold the reins of power, cynically set in motion the wheels of death.

In the absence of a vast human hope, the younger generations are no longer stimulated to participate in the building up of the human community.

Confronted by emptiness, many young people are scarred by apathy and disillusionment, and they start looking for distractions that anaesthetize an intolerable anxiety.

However difficult it is, it is essential to undertake a total disarmament in the world without delay. The creation of a peace army, dependent on the United Nations' watch council and equipped in the most effective way, is indispensable, in order to be capable of intervening, at any moment, anywhere in the world, to guarantee the maintenance of peace.

With regard to disarmament, it is obvious that the complex situation cannot be dealt with by simplistic or illusory answers. The United Nations alone is capable of assuming responsibility for the negotiations so urgently needed to bring about a general disarmament. Bargaining for limited disarmament generally leads to never-ending discussions while a situation of permanent insecurity continues to reign.

5. Science and technology can either destroy or build. How can all the resources freed by disarmament be used to help a humanity which is increasing in number each day; for example by discovering methods of intensive food production adapted to local situations, or finding ways to alleviate or heal physical and mental suffering, or providing a dwelling for everyone? What things are essential for the UN to be able to

give the younger generations the chance to contribute to the development of the whole world, stimulating at the same time a passionate interest in the human person?

6. Many young people will have the necessary courage to be ambassadors of trust in places where there is mistrust, and bearers of peace where there is humiliation.

Will adults be ready to commit themselves to support these young people, and to lead the way for indispensable changes to be made in the UN? Do they realize that so many young people are eagerly waiting to be transformed by enthusiasm? An enthusiasm for a vital mission: that of making the world a place fit to live in, and of fostering trust between the peoples of the earth.

SECHS FRAGEN AN DIE UNO

Eine Artikel aus dem "Brief aus Taizé" - Sonderausgabe 1986

Sieben Kinder, darunter ein fünf Monate altes Baby, begleiteten Frère Roger (Prior der Bruderschaft in Taizé) auf seinem Besuch beim Generalsekretär der Vereinten Nationen am 2. Juli in Genf. Mit ihrer indischen, kolumbianischen, afrikanischen, libanesischen, europäischen und moslem-marokkanischen Abstammung spiegelten sie ein Stück weit die ganze Erde wider.

Frère Roger übergab Perez de Cuellar einen sechsteiligen Fragenkatalog, in dem sich die Erwartung Jugendlicher aus allen Kontinenten artikuliert, die UNO möge zu einem unter den Völkern Vertrauen stiftenden Organ werden. Nun kommt es darauf an, dass Jugendliche in den 130 Ländern, in die der BRIEF AUS TAIZE versandt wird, die sechs Fragen bis zum weltweiten Treffen, das 1987 in Taizé stattfindet, durcharbeiten. Die Antworten werden in Taizé gesammelt, zusammenfassend ausgewertet und der UNO überbracht. Perez de Cuellar hat zugesichert, dass alles ernsthaft geprüft wird.

Hier der Wortlaut der von Frère Roger in Genf übergebenen 6 Fragen:

WERDEN JUGENDLICHE ES WAGEN, BOTSCHAFTER DES VERTRAUENS ZU SEIN?

Jugendliche aller Kontinente, von Leidenschaft für den Frieden erfüllt, suchen Wege, Vertrauen auf der Erde zu stiften, damit die Kinder und Jugendlichen von Heute nicht morgen in dunklen Ländern zu leben haben, in denen der Tod umgeht. Für die, die sich zur Bedrohung ihrer Zukunft nicht äussern können, komme ich als betagter Mann in Begleitung von Kindern, um der UNO einen Fragenkatalog zu übergeben, der die Erwartung unzähliger Jugendlicher erläutert.

1. Welche grundlegenden Veränderungen sind anzuregen, damit die UNO ein Ort begeisterten Einsatzes zum Aufbau von Vertrauen zwischen den Völkern wird?

Wie kann ein Ueberwachungsrat eingesetzt werden, der Tag und Nacht in unmittelbarer Bereitschaft steht und mit der Autorität ausgestattet ist, einen Kriegsausbruch zu verhindern? Nichts ist schwerer aufzuhalten als ein einmal ausgebrochener Krieg.

Was ist geeignet, dafür zu sorgen, dass die UNO niemals zum Austragungsort politischer Streitereien und Rivalitäten wird, kein Ort, an dem man sich gegenseitig demütigt?

Völker können ohnehin schon gedemütigt sein, wenn sich Programme, die auf gerechtere Güterverteilung abzielen, als Fehlschläge erweisen, oder andererseits durch Konzentration enormen Potentials unübersehbare Machtmittel in die Hände einiger weniger geraten. Im einen wie im anderen Fall heischt demütigung nach Kompensation. Sie veranlasst die Regierungen oft zur Entwicklung unermesslicher militärischer Stärke, um den anderen zu beeindrucken. Die rasch fortschreitende Perfektionierung der Militärtechnik allein führt unweigerlich zum Bau stets noch verheerenderer Waffensysteme. Das unumkehrbare Räderwerk der damit verbundenen schwindelerregenden Ausgaben erschöpft in zunehmendem Mass die für die Gesamtheit der Völker unbedingt erforderlichen Ressourcen.

2. Welche Garantien können die Verantwortlichen der Staaten dafür leisten, dass sie das Vertrauen der Völker nicht missbrauchen werden? Vertrauen auf der Erde erfordert Hellhörigkeit; es bleibt sich bewusst, wozu man sich seiner bedienen kann.

Welche Umwälzungen jedem Mitgliedsstaat der UNO nahelegen, damit alle Üblichen Prestigeausgaben zugunsten einschneidenderer Bedürfnisse, vor allem der am stärksten unterversorgten Menschen, abgebaut werden? Sind im Uebrigen die politischen Machthaber zur Ablehnung von Persönlichkeitskult und Machtmitteln jeder Art entschlossen?

Viele in der neuen Generation sind es müde mitanzusehen, wie in der politischen Szene durch Attacken, die bis zur Anschwärzung von Personen und manchmal sogar bis zur Brutalität gehen, die Absichten der Gegenseite entstellt werden. Unter anderem Ziehen sämtliche derartigen Verhaltensweisen nach sich, dass so viele Jugendliche skeptisch werden und die Lust verlieren, mit ihrem Leben einen konstruktiven Beitrag zu leisten.

3. Eine Bedingung für den Frieden stellt die gerechte Umverteilung der materiellen Güter auf der Erde dar. Es ist deshalb unerlässlich, ein neues Wirtschaftsrecht zu erarbeiten, das Wohnverhältnisse, Gesundheit und Grundernährung auf der selben Ebene wie alle anderen Rechte des Menschen (Menschenrechte usw) festschreibt. Dieses Wirtschaftsrecht setzt voraus, dass Initiativen von Einzelpersonen ausgehen können, jedoch in genau begrenztem Umfang.
4. Der mögliche Einsatz hochgezüchteter Techniken, um einen Teil der Menschheit auszulöschen, verschärft eine virulente Vertrauenskrise: die Völker geraten in Angst voreinander, und die Verantwortlichen der Staaten werden von der selben Angst erfasst. Das Ergebnis ist Rückzug auf sich selbst, die schöpferischen Fähigkeiten erstarren im Schrecken.

Dennoch wollen alle Völker Frieden, niemals Krieg, niemals Folter, niemals Konzentrationslager. Es erweist sich, dass es in jedem Volk einen niedrigen Prozentsatz von Leuten gibt, die einen expansionistischen Kurs durchsetzen wollen, oder, wenn sie an die Macht kommen, imstande sind, zynisch Todesmaschinerien in Gang zu setzen.

Ohne weitreichende, menschenmögliche Hoffnung fehlt der neuen Generation der Antrieb, sich am Aufbau der Menschheitsfamilie zu beteiligen. Angesichts der Leere sind viele Jugendliche von Apathie und Enttäuschung geprägt; sie suchen sich ablenkende Inhalte, die die unerträgliche Angst betäuben.

So schwierig es sich auch gestalten mag: es ist dringend erforderlich, die totale, weltweite Abrüstung unverzüglich vorzunehmen. Die Schaffung einer mit zuverlässigsten Mitteln ausgestatteten, vom UNO-Ueberwachungsrat abhängenden Friedensarmee ist von daher unabdingbar, damit jederzeit an jedem Punkt des Erdballs eingegriffen und der Frieden garantiert werden kann.

Angesichts der Komplexität der Lage liegt die Unzulässigkeit vereinfachender oder illusorischer Lösungen hinsichtlich der Abrüstung klar auf der Hand. Nur die UNO kann die äusserst dringenden Verhandlungen auf dem Weg zu genereller Abrüstung übernehmen. Gespräche über begrenzte Abrüstung führen im allgemeinen zu nicht endenden Diskussionen und beseitigen den Schwebezustand beständiger Unsicherheit nicht.

5. Wissenschaft und Technik können entweder zerstören oder aufbauen. Wie können die durch die Abrüstung freiwerdenden Ressourcen der zahlenmässig täglich wachsenden Menschheit zur Hilfe werden, zB durch die Erfindung von den örtlichen Gegebenheiten, jeweils angepassten Methoden, zur Intensivproduktion von Nahrungsmitteln, zur Linderung oder Heilung physischer oder psychischer Leiden oder zur Schaffung von Wohnraum für alle? Welche Mittel und Wege sind zu diesem Zweck unerlässlich, damit die UNO es der neuen Generation ermöglichen kann, einen Beitrag zur Entwicklung des gesamten Universums zu leisten, und zugleich auf ein leidenschaftliches Eintreten für den Menschen als Person hinzuarbeiten?
6. Viele, sehr viele Jugendliche werden es wagen, Botschafter des Vertrauens zu sein, wo Misstrauen herrscht, und Träger des Friedens, wo Demütigung geschieht.

Wer von den Erwachsenen wird sich verpflichten, den Jugendlichen unter die Arme zu greifen, um die unerlässlichen Veränderungen der UNO durchzuführen? Wissen es die Erwachsenen? Unübersehbar viele in der neuen Generation warten darauf, von Begeisterung erfasst zu werden, suchen Wege, den unersetzlichen Auftrag zu erfüllen, die Erde bewohnbar zu machen und zwischen den Völkern Vertrauen zu stiften.

LETTER FROM A READER

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I thank God that publications like this exist. They give us the opportunity to see what each other has accomplished in our work for the church. My name is Craig Campbell, and I am a member of the Board of Luther League of the American Lutheran Church. Luther League is the name for our church's youth organization (in general youth of senior high school age, 16-19 - editors remark). I live in Eugene, Oregon and attend Central Lutheran Church.

Here in the U.S., the role of young people in the church is stressed as being important. This is, as I see it, for two reasons. The first being that youth are both the church of tomorrow and of the church today. Now, more than ever, the American Lutheran Church (ALC) is giving a leading role in church politics to the young. Why? It's simple. We, as youth, have many gifts that God has given us. Perhaps it is an ability to speak well with adults, or care for the sick or elderly. Maybe it is the gift of effective evangelism or leadership. The church knows that such gifts can help to make the church strong.

The second reason that youth involvement is important is because here in the U.S. and perhaps in other countries as well, youth are leaving the life of the church in large numbers. As II Timothy 4:3 tells us, "For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own likings, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander into myths."

Today, especially here in the U.S., it is becoming harder and harder for Christ's word to be heard because many are turning from the church. Youth are turning to a world where pre-marital sex is almost socially acceptable, where hundreds of abortions are performed daily and where drug and alcohol abuse run rampant. For us Christians, the task of helping those who are falling away from God and the church seems hopeless. What can we as Lutherans and specifically Lutheran youth do? II Timothy 4:5 tells us, "As for you, always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil your ministry."

Sometimes it is easy for us, in our work for the Lord to feel secluded. We tend to think locally. When we think of Christians, we think of our friends, or the members of our congregation. What we fail to realize is just how big the Body of Christ is! We are by no means alone when we work for Christ. My local Luther League only has some 20 active members and the city has 100 (ALC). The North Pacific District Luther League (Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana and Alaska) has 13,000 members. Nationally, we stand over 400,000 strong. Again, that is only one small part of the whole of the Lutheran Church. There are millions of Lutheran youth world-wide. You and I are no longer so alone. Considering our numbers and the fact that we have Christ's help, our task does not sound so hopeless. All we have to do is stand up and let each other know that we're out there. Become involved in your church. Write your experiences down and send them in to this newsletter and let us know how you are doing in Christ's work.

In Christ,
Craig Campbell

BELIEVERS AND ATHEISTS MET AT ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS IN KOTIMAA, FINLAND

On August 9, 1985 - excerpts from article by Heikki Jääskeläinen - translation from Finnish by Irja Gordon

Over 20,000 young people and representatives of youth delegations from 157 countries participated from July 27 to August 2, 1985 in the twelfth youth and student festival taking place in Moscow. The theme of the festival was "For the solidarity, peace and friendship against imperialism."

New aspects in the history of the festival movement were the round table discussions in the official program concerning the solidarity activities of the religious organizations as well as a dialogue about the possibilities for cooperation between the believers and the atheists and the exchange of ideas how to protect life on earth.

The festival, originally the festival of communist youth and student organizations, has expanded in 30 years into a worldwide festival movement in which young people from the left till right wing participate in many countries.

While the organization of the festival in Helsinki in 1962 was rather limited - there were participants only from the Finnish Democratic Youth Federation and the Youth Organization of the Agrarian Party - there was now a delegation of 450 people from Finland at the Moscow festival, including a representation of the youth work of the Lutheran Church. The common concern of all the participants, who represented different political, philosophic and religious convictions, was the threat of war and increasing injustice in the world.

What is good for a European is not necessarily good for everybody

How large the festival program was can be judged not only from the number of participants on different occasions - on some occasions over 100,000 participants - but also from the number of different programs: in one day there were an average of 150 different programs. That is why the impression of each participant depends much on the programs he/she attended.

Pirjo Markkola from Tampere represented at the festival the World Council of Churches and Y.W.C.A. According to her, in the range of Y.W.C.A., the work for development of the relations between the West and East has been a special concern.

- In Finland peace and friendship have been emphasized but in addition to this, a concrete work for solidarity is needed. This came out of the discussions with representatives from Africa and Latin America.

- The Finnish Christians should know better the conditions of Christians on other continents. What is good for a European is not necessarily good for everybody.

Often the topics of conversations were dealing with disarmament and atom bombs instead of with the crucial question of how to put justice into practice. Injustice mostly touches women and children in the Third World.

Direct and open conversation

Timo Ruuskanen from Vantaa represented the youth work of the Church in the Finnish Delegation. He was one of the chairpersons in the round table discussions when possibilities of cooperation between believers and atheists were discussed.

- Discussions were open. Christians claimed full political rights and considered that if they, because of their conviction, cannot participate in political activities and be members of a political party they are second rate citizens.

- It was often mentioned that it is not the ideology and the religion which are in contradiction, but it is the different economic systems. Both believers and atheists emphasized that peace is not only a situation without a war but a situation where justice has been put into practice.

It was also stated that Christians have no better solutions how to solve the problems of peace and justice. The Bible is not a handbook for peace work and does not give instruction e.g. how to organize international relations. The deepest meaning of the Christian Faith is to motivate and encourage Christians to protect life on earth in cooperation with all people of good will.

The Church was well represented

The representation of Christian churches and organizations at the Moscow festival was the largest ever before. Among participants were: the World Council of Churches, the Lutheran World Federation, the European Ecumenical Youth Council, the European Quakers and the Christian Peace Conference.

- The festival would have been an excellent opportunity to make the youth work of our church better known, not only internationally but also among our own youth organizations, said the Finns who had been in Moscow and wish that the church will play a more active role when making preparations for the next festival.

DAS INTERNATIONALE JAHR DER JUGEND BRACHTE WIEDER EINMAL SEINE FRUECHTE

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(Evangelische Jugend trifft sich in Bratislava) - Julius Filo

Die Slowakische evangelische Kirche A.B. in der CSSR hat am 14. und 15. Dezember 1985 nach mehreren Jahren ein Treffen ihrer Jugend veranstaltet. Die 161 Delegierten aus allen 14 Senioraten (Kirchenkreisen) der Kirche und 56 Studenten der Fakultät (insgesamt 217 Teilnehmer) tagten in den Räumlichkeiten der Evangelischen Gemeinde, des Generalbischofsamtes und der Slowakischen evangelischen theologischen Fakultät. Das Treffen trug den Namen "Das Friedenstreffen der jungen Mitarbeiter der Slowakischen evangelischen Kirche A.B. in der CSSR".

Warum macht diese gute Nachricht so viel Freude?

Es gibt einige Besonderheiten, durch die sich dieses Treffen auszeichnet. Die leitenden Gremien der Kirche haben dieses Treffen auf Wunsch vieler Mitarbeiter der Kirche und auf Grund des breit unterstützten Vorschlages, der beim Generalkonvent in Bratislava im Vorjahr von unserer Jugend gemacht worden war, veranstaltet. Der Wunsch war, in diesem Internationalen Jahr der Jugend auch in unserer Kirche nicht nur auf der Gemeindeebene, sondern auch auf der gesamtkirchlichen Ebene die Vertreter der Jugend zu versammeln. Eine weitere Besonderheit kann man darin sehen, dass die meisten Anwesenden keine Theologen waren, sondern junge Mitarbeiter vieler Gemeinden der Kirche, vor allem aber aus solchen Städten, wo es eine Jugendgruppe in der Gemeinde gibt. Für einige wiederum, die in ihren Gemeinden keine Altersgenossen haben, bot dieses Treffen eine wertvolle Möglichkeit, junge Mitarbeiter der Kirche (unter 30 Jahren) zu treffen und so eine Stärkung im Glauben zu erhalten. Thematisch war das Treffen auf den Frieden bezogen, da die Unterstützung der Friedensbemühungen eine hohe Priorität in der Kirche hat. Es gehört zu den Besonderheiten, dass dieses Treffen unter dem Vorsitz des Generalbischofs der Kirche, Prof. Dr. Jan Michalko, abgehalten wurde, der alle Teile des Programms mit väterlichen Liebe und mit Verständnis begleitete.

Was kann man über die diskutierten Themen berichten?

Im Programm waren nach der Bibelmeditation, gehalten von dem Theologiestudenten Milos Klatik, vier Beiträge geplant. Drei standen, wie schon die VI. Allchristliche Friedensversammlung, die im Juli 1985 in Prag tagte, unter dem Motto "Erwähle das Leben". Die Referate wurden vom Bischofssekretär Miroslav Kyska, dem Konsenior Jan Zatkan und Prof. Dr. Karol Nandrasky, Dekan der Theologischen Fakultät, gehalten. Im vierten Beitrag unter dem Thema "Die Beteiligung der Jugend am Leben der Kirche dient dem Frieden" hat der Jugendkoordinator des LWB, Dr. Julius Filo, über die Prioritäten der Jugendarbeit des LWB auf verschiedenen Ebenen gesprochen. Die Eröffnung und Auswertung der jeweiligen Plenarsitzungen, Versammlungstage und des Treffens insgesamt hat der Herr Generalbischof Prof. Dr. Jan Michalko übernommen.

Die Teilnehmer haben in der zweiten Hälfte in drei Arbeitsgruppen diskutiert. Im Rahmen dieser Diskussionen sind auch viele Hoffnungen zum Ausdruck gebracht worden und viele wertvolle Vorschläge für die Jugendarbeit der Kirche unterbreitet worden. Im allgemeinen hat sich gezeigt, dass für die Jugend der Kirche sich die Friedensarbeit aus einigen Schritten zusammensetzt:

Die Arbeit für den Frieden beginnt mit dem - geschenkten - Frieden zwischen Gott und dem Menschen, setzt sich fort in den Bemühungen um Frieden in der Familie, Gemeinde und Gesellschaft und findet ihre Vollendung in der friedlichen Bearbeitung der Probleme der Welt, wobei alle diese Schritte eine Einheit bilden, die in der kirchlichen Friedensarbeit eingehalten werden muss.



Friedenskonferenz der jungen Mitarbeiter der Slowakischen Evangelischen AB Kirche in der CSSR

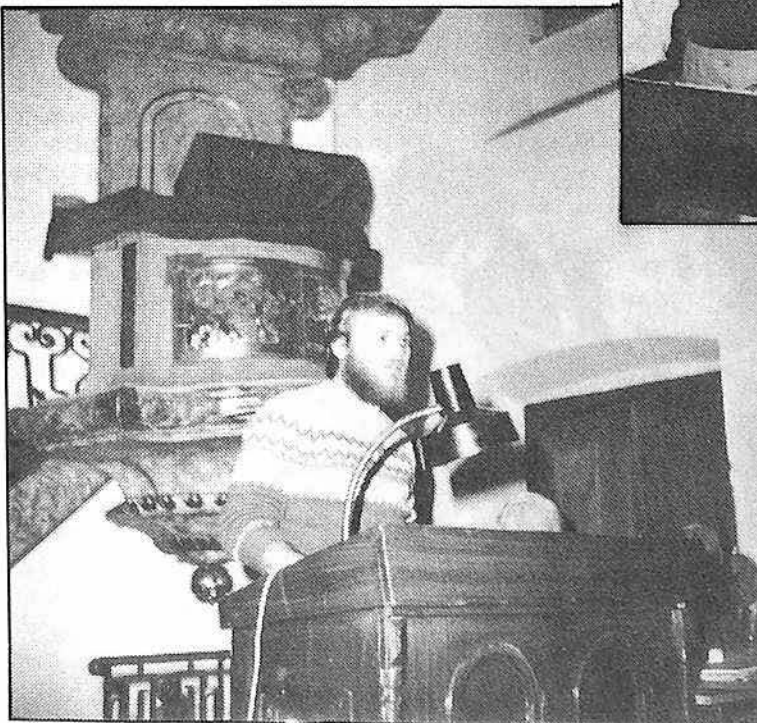
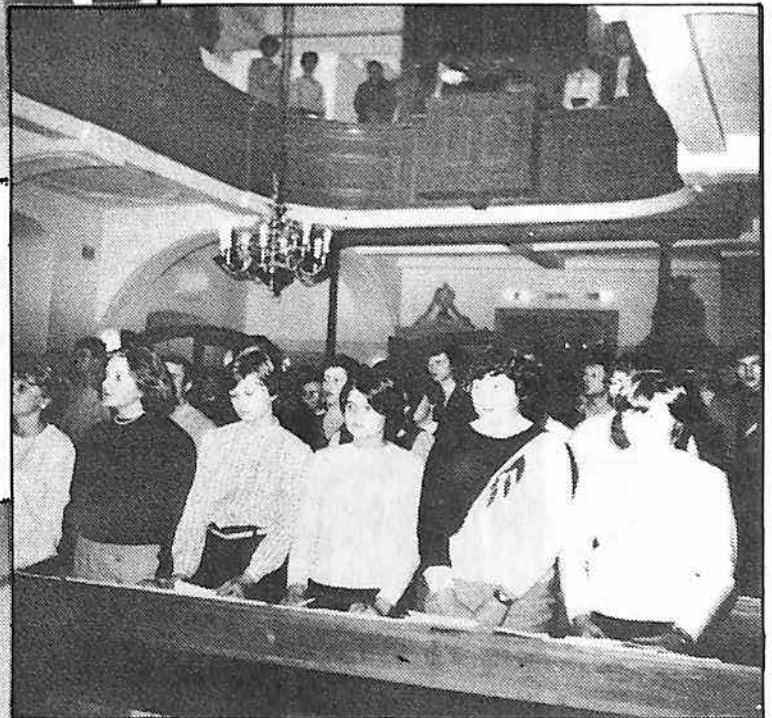


Photo: Pfarrer Pavel Gabris

Was waren die Höhepunkte?

Das geistliche Rahmenprogramm war teilweise von den Studenten der Theologischen Fakultät und teilweise von der Jugendgruppe der Gemeinde in Bratislava vorbereitet worden. Es gab zwei geistliche Höhepunkte, die erwähnt werden sollten.

Nach der Arbeitseinheit am ersten Tag hat der Herr Generalbischof der Kirche mit grosser Freude alle vorgebrachten Vorschläge angenommen und als geistlicher Leiter der Kirche versprochen, dass im nächsten Jahr ein weiteres Treffen veranstaltet werden wird. Es soll sich, vielleicht sogar mit erhöhter Teilnehmerzahl, mit den ersten Schritten der kirchlichen Friedensarbeit, wie sie oben von der Jugend der Kirche klasifiziert wurden, befassen. Als Ausdruck der gemeinsamen Freude hat dann der Jugendchor der Bratislaver Gemeinde mit etwa 40 Mitgliedern durch seine Darbietung diesen gesegneten Tag gekrönt.

Am zweiten Tag gab es einen von den jungen Pastoren der Kirche und dem Jugendchor vorbereiteten Abendmahlsgottesdienst, an dem auch viele Mitglieder der Gemeinde in Bratislava teilgenommen haben.

Ein Zeichen des Verständnisses

Es muss zum Schluss gesagt werden, dass diese Veranstaltung der Slowakischen evangelischen Kirche A.B. in der CSSR unter anderem auch das Verständnis der staatlichen Behörden für die Bedürfnisse der evangelischen Kirche in der kirchlichen Jugendarbeit dokumentiert, worüber sich bestimmt vor allem die Mitglieder der evangelischen Kirche in meiner Heimat, in der CSSR, aufrichtig freuen.



JUGENDGRUPPE BEIM MUZISIEREN

TAIZE EUROPEAN MEETING IN BARCELONA
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by Matti Peiponen, Finland

It was really chaotic in Barcelona in Spain (Catalonia to be exact) on the 30th of December, 1985, when about 15 thousand young people from almost every European country invaded the city. The underground was jam-packed for five days with noisy but happy Italians, Yugoslavians, Germans, Scandinavians, Poles, Hungarians, Finns etc. singing Taizé-songs and speaking countless languages. All this meant that the seventh European meeting for young people had begun. These pilgrims came to pray together, and to get to know the Catalonians.

This meeting was arranged by the community of Taizé which is situated in South-Eastern France. Taizé is not a monastery although about 90 brothers who have taken the vows of obedience and celibacy live there or work outside the community. The brothers are Catholics, Protestants and from other denominations. The prior is brother Roger who founded the community in 1940 in Taizé. Nowadays the brothers work all around the world in shanty towns and in big city slums helping and sharing their lives with the poor. Only a few of the brothers are pastors.

Every year the brothers have arranged European meetings with the help of volunteers. The history of these meetings starts from the smaller pilgrimages in the 70's. The theme of this pilgrimage was: "An inner pilgrimage lasting an entire lifetime, continually returning to the sources of faith to find the energy to live a life of forgiveness and reconciliation, visiting with Christ each of our own prisons to see some of the walls fall down and spaces of freedom open up" (Letter from Italy). Now these gatherings have become huge pilgrimages attracting about 20 thousand participants. Meetings have been held in big cities and the most important thing has been sharing the life of the people of God in a particular city.

The meeting had several dimensions. The first level was the family. Most of the participants stayed in a family. The second level was the local parish, where young people gathered every morning for a prayer with members of a parish and participants. This dimension reminded us of our responsibilities in our own surroundings including the family, our work and the parish. In Barcelona we had the opportunity to visit "places of hope", i.e. local hospitals, communities and old people's homes. I went to visit a community of laymen who follow the order of Charles de Foucaud. In the afternoon there were celebrations of common prayer in churches. One highlight was welcoming the New Year.

We studied the "Letter from Madras" written by brother Roger in discussion groups and during prayers in Barcelona. The title refers to the World Meeting for young people which was held at the same time in Madras in India. The letter consists of meditative texts; mostly they are brother Roger's own reflections and spiritual notes. The letter speaks about commitment and forgiveness. The prior of Taizé writes: "Giving yourself to Christ, thrusting in him, forgiving others is all one and the same life-giving movement." He wants to emphasize that we may not separate spiritual commitment from social commitment. Commitment is fundamental to reconciliation both with Christ and with our neighbors. "Because of Christ and the

Gospel, will you prepare yourself every morning to forgive? As you do you will see a space of freedom opening out before you which no-one can take away." Everyone has to make the commitment; Christ and the whole world need committed people who are ready to pray, to give time for social work and love with joy their fellowmen. I find myself sometimes criticizing my country and my church, but not being willing to contribute to repair the mistakes and build up fellowship. I remember my East-European friends who carry responsibilities in their churches. They have made long lasting commitments, which really take up their time and demand dedication.

What are my feelings concerning the European meeting in Barcelona? I will soon graduate from my Theological School in Finland. I do not yet know what my place in the church of Christ will be. I am a pilgrim. For me this meeting, like the two earlier meetings I took part in, was important for my spiritual life. The meeting was based to a great extent on prayer. One can ask: "Why should you travel so many days just to pray? Can't you practise your prayer at home?" For me it was to understand the universal character of the Gospel, which we can feel when we celebrate common prayer in different languages and in different ways. God teaches us to become humble and avoid any fanaticism. Silence goes with prayer. In silence you can a your inner life and let God speak in you. The rule of Taizé says: "Our common prayer is set within the communion of saints, but for this communion with the beliefs of every age to become a reality, we have to give ourselves to fervent intercession for mankind and the church."

Taizé is an ecumenical community where we can find fellowship with different kind of people: the religiously devoted, sceptics and seekers. This kind of ecumenism is more experimental and personal than dogmatic or confessional. Taizé is neither a movement nor a church of an ideology. It is the "spirit" of Taizé which wants to encourage people, especially the young, to be the signs of the hope in their own surroundings. Also we Lutherans have the duty to become the signs of the hope. We have to ask ourselves what our commitment to our own church is and how we can improve the fellowship among young Lutherans in the world.

The Hardanger Months is an international Leadership Training Program of the World Student Christian Federation, taking place in a Norwegian Folkhogskole. Besides the WSCF participants (20-30) there are also participants in the normal school program. A course for one group takes nine months. An interesting curriculum and for the Christian community building effective style of living, provides a good opportunity to gather a lot of knowledge about spiritual and political problems of today's youth and gives a good preparation for a youth leadership role. The LWF Youth Desk supported one student's participation at the Hardanger Months in a previous course and we are therefore sharing with you the following reports. Any questions or applications should be sent to Hardanger Folkhogskole, N-5771 Lofthus, Norway. (There is no Lutheran participant in the present course).

HARDANGER MONTHS REPORT

Report written by the "Hardanger Months Public Relationsgroup" in which students as well as staff participate - February 1985

Introduction

The first half of our program is over now and we would like to inform you about what we have done over the past months and what our plans are for the coming months.

Our problems with getting used to the Folk High School system have resolved themselves and we are now accustomed to life at Hardanger Folk High School. There is a good relationship between Hardanger Months students and the Norwegian students and some of our group spent their Christmas at the homes of Norwegian friends. Others went to Bergen and stayed in the apartment of Henrik Mohn, the student chaplain of the SCM (Student Christian Movement).

At the moment there is a lot of snow here and we are making the most of it by learning to ski. (Our instructors are very pleased with our progress).

In the past few months we have concentrated on two themes: education and theology.

Education

In a five-week block on this theme, we dealt with four issues: education for the oppressed (Paulo Freire), the mass-media, education for men and women and the ideological and philosophical foundations of education. We worked in groups so that everybody studied two of the four issues that were offered. The highlights of these studies were shared with everybody in presentations made by the groups.

Theology

In this block we split into interest groups and discussed articles on contemporary theological issues such as African theology, liberation theology, the electric church and nonviolence. We also did some things together: we played a "biblical confrontation game", a role game on church

politics and we developed our own creeds and prayers based on our reflections on art from "grass root" church groups in Latin America.

Politics and Ideologies

We are presently engaged in a five-week block of political issues. So far we have only had a brief study of Marx criticism of religion because we have spent a lot of time on a work/study project on Namibia in which the whole school has participated. In the coming weeks, however, we will be studying the economic basis and means of oppression (particularly the role of transnationals in the world hunger problem), the development politics of various western countries, and the role of the church in these matters.

Europe trip

One of the highlights of the year is a trip which will enable the Hardanger Months participants to get first hand exposure to current political, theological and social movements in Europe. Each of us will visit one or more countries to study issues of interest to us. The visits will take us to Northern Ireland, Scotland, England, Switzerland, Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands, Germany and France.

Our last area of study will be movement building and what we learn from our trip and the visits to the European movements will provide us with useful information and experience to compare with our movements back home.

Remarks

Hardanger Months has had its share of problems which is probably to be expected since this is in many regards an experimental year. In the fourth week of January, Manuel Quintero, the General Secretary of the WSCF, visited us to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the program.

There is a general feeling among participants and staff that the visit is a positive step towards dealing with many of the problems.

One of the problems we have faced is a lack of resources for our education. The WSCF has committed itself to raise funds to assist us in improving the library and acquiring other resources such as films, videos, etc.

We have also had difficulty in coming to terms with the diversity of our group as regards educational backgrounds, expectations of the course and cultural differences. It has been difficult to design a curriculum which reflects the interests and needs of all the participants. We are trying to deal with this by organizing Bible studies and events designed specifically for cultural sharing.

All these problems were complicated by the fact that until now we were left to face them on our own. In this regard we are taking some concrete steps to improve the program for next year: the WSCF will try to involve itself more directly by maintaining better lines of communication with our staff and visiting the school more often. We are also encouraging the SCM in Bergen to serve as an outside support group which can meet regularly with participants and staff to evaluate problems and needs.

Despite our problems we remain optimistic about the potential for our course and are working to realize it.

IMPRESSIONS OF "HARDANGER MONTHS"

by Ragnar Ingibergsson

(a Canadian participant at the Hardanger Months, supported financially by the LWF/Youth Desk)

In the Hardanger Months report we mentioned some problems which this program has faced, most of which can be attributed to poor planning. The course was conceived by people involved in the Norwegian SCM and Folk High School system and developed with the WSCF Inter-Regional Office (IRO). Unfortunately, once the initial planning was completed many of the people who had been involved were content to turn everything over to the staff. Since they had met each other only once before the program started, there was a lot of confusion from the outset. They were left to plan the curriculum without clearly defined objectives from the WSCF and without knowing the participants beforehand.

In an effort to gauge the interests and expectations of the participants we began with "social biographies"; presentations about our home countries and the issues which we faced in the movements which we were involved in. The staff hoped that the concerns raised in the social biographies would provide the basis from which further planning on the subjects of theology, education and politics could proceed.

In retrospect it was a failure. It soon became very clear that ours was a diverse group, not only in terms of our places of origin, but also in terms of educational backgrounds, expectations of the course, theological perspectives (and religious practice), and political awareness. Some participants came expecting something akin to a Bible school, some thought it would be more like a university, and others expected to be involved in solidarity work with political struggles back home.

This diversity proved to be difficult to deal with and when the social biographies were complete we still felt that we did not know where we were heading or for what purpose. As a result the subsequent studies on theology and education often seemed to be planned in an ad hoc manner and presented with little continuity.

Since Christmas, however, things have gone much better for a couple of reasons. As was mentioned in the Hardanger Months report, many of our logistical problems (finances, resources, support) have been taken up by the IRO. Also we have been engaged in a study of politics which has been better received than anything so far.

The participants have taken a more active role in the instruction and have been interested and sympathetic towards the political issues which others have presented. In our evaluation of this block, many felt that this study of politics might have provided a better basis for studying theology and education than the social biographies did. (We are learning from our mistakes).

One of the highlights of the year will be a visit to various places in Europe to gain some insight into movements and issues there. This week I am

leaving for Northern Ireland and will be finding out about groups which are involved in building understanding and reconciliation within an often divided community.

When we return we will conclude the year with a section on movement building.

It is probably clear by now that this first year had gone somewhat less than smoothly and I do not think I have overstated the problems. After an abysmal start, however, things have improved steadily. Morale is higher now than last term and people are more motivated and involved in the education. I personally feel optimistic that the mistakes we have made have been recognized and will not be repeated. The IRO is giving us more support, a board for hardanger Months is being established in Bergen and better ideas for the education are coming out in evaluations.

Another positive aspect of the program is the informal sharing and learning among participants in our free time. Through exposure to students from so many countries I have discovered a lot about the state of student Christian groups on other continents and gained insight into political issues which do not come out clearly in the western media.

I think that the opportunity to study with students from all regions of the world can be of great benefit in terms of building international awareness and solidarity in an age where this is becoming increasingly important.

I remain committed to the concept of this program and feel that it has been worthwhile and will continue to improve. Thank you for the opportunity you have given me and I encourage you to continue to support the program.

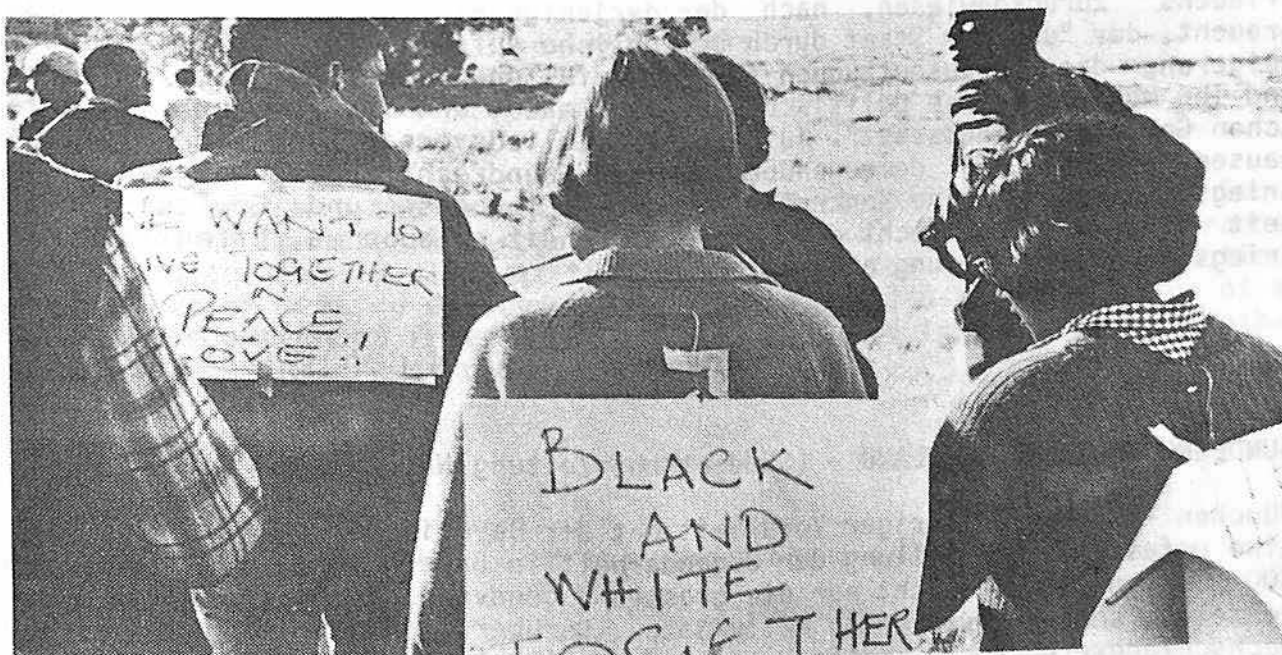
NEWS IN BRIEF - from the life of the youth in the world

BERLIN WEST zu SUEDAFRIKA - (epd)

Die Evangelische Jugend Berlin sammelt in diesem Jahr für den Fonds "Gerechtigkeit und Versöhnung" beim Südafrikanischen Kirchenrat. Mit dem Jugendopfer '86 sollen Bemühungen um Rechtsbeihilfe für Personen finanziell gefördert werden, die wegen ihrer Einstellung gegen das Apartheid-Regime in Südafrika inhaftiert sind. Aus dem Fonds werden u.a. Rechtsbeistände finanziert, wird Familienangehörigen bei Besuchen das Reisegeld erstattet und erhalten die Familien Unterstützung, wenn der Ernährer der Familie im Gefängnis ist.

Translation:

This year the Evangelical youth in Berlin raises funds for "Justice and Reconciliation" of the Church Council in South Africa. With the "Youth Offering '86" efforts will be made to finance legal assistance to persons in jail in South Africa because of their political views about the apartheid regime. The fund will also cover travel costs for family members to visit the jail and to support the families while the bread-winner is in prison.



BERLIN WEST zu SUEDAFRIKA - (epd)

Jugendsynode richtet Offenen Brief an Staatspräsident Botha - Die Jugendsynode der Berliner evangelischen Kirche hat am 25./26. Januar, 1986 einen Offenen Brief an Staatspräsident Botha geschrieben, welcher auch Bundesausserminister Dietrich Genscher und dem Repräsentanten des Afrikanischen National-Congresses (ANC) in Bonn übermittelt wurde. Darin wird unter anderem geschrieben: "Wir werden unsere Bemühungen fortsetzen, Ihrem Rassistenregime die politische Aufwertung und wirtschaftliche Rückendeckung seitens der Bundesrepublik Deutschland zu entziehen. Wir bekräftigen unser Eintreten für Aufkündigung der diplomatischen Beziehungen mit dem heutigen südafrikanischen Staat, dessen Verfassungsgrundlage des Rassismus dem Grundgesetz für die BRD krass widerspricht und es verletzt".

BERLIN WEST RE. SOUTH AFRICA - Translation into English:

Youth Synod writes an open letter to President Botha - The Youth Synod of the Berlin Evangelical Church on January 25/26, 1986 wrote an open letter to President Botha, which was also sent to Foreign Minister Dietrich Genscher and the representative of the African National Congress in Bonn. Here an excerpt from this letter: "We are going to continue with our efforts to make Germany withdraw their political revaluation and commercial support of your racist regime. We confirm our support of a termination of the diplomatic relations with the present Republic of South Africa whose constitutional law is based on racism, which is contrary to and offends the fundamental laws of the Federal Republic of Germany".

BUNDESREPUBLIK DEUTSCHLAND - (epd)

Sievershausen (Kr. Hannover), 2. Dezember 1985. Die "Aktionsgemeinschaft Dienst für den Frieden e.V." (AGDF), ein Zusammenschluss von 19 Organisationen für Friedensarbeit, hat die These des Arbeitskreises "Sicherung des Friedens" zurückgewiesen, nach der derjenige ein Verfassungsrecht missbraucht, der "unserem Staat durch öffentliche Aufrufe für Wehrdienstverweigerung die Voraussetzungen für die Erfüllung seiner Aufgaben entzieht und ihn möglicherweise politisch schutzlos macht und ihn fremden militärischen Gewalttaten aussetzt". Auf einer Mitgliedsversammlung in Sievershausen wies die AGDF demgegenüber auf das Grundrecht auf Verweigerung des Kriegsdienstes als eine Konkretisierung der Glaubens- und Gewissensfreiheit hin; das Grundrecht der Meinungsfreiheit erlaube es, öffentlich zur Kriegsdienstverweigerung aufzurufen.

BUNDESREPUBLIK DEUTSCHLAND - (Süddeutsche Zeitung Nr. 13)

München - Nach mehrjähriger Vorarbeit hat der Bayerische Jugendring (BJR) eine umfassende Darstellung der Jugendarbeit in Bayern vorgelegt. Auf über 600 Seiten werden nicht nur die grossen Jugendverbände im Freistaat vorgestellt, sondern auch deren Aktivitäten. Darüber hinaus befasst sich das Nachschlagewerk auch kritisch mit der Situation der Jugendlichen in Bayern. Wie BJR-Präsident Robert Sauter bei der Präsentation vor der Presse in München sagte, ist dies das erste "Jugend-Weissbuch" in der Bundesrepublik.

CANADA - (Canadian Lutheran Youth Gatherings)

Saskatoon, SA -- Preparations are underway again to call together Lutheran youth from across Canada for a national gathering in 1986. PEACE+FULLY+YOURS will be the theme for the 1986 Canadian Lutheran Youth Gathering scheduled for August 21 - 24, 1986 in Saskatoon.

DENMARK - (Journal of World Education)

In celebration of the United Nations International Year of Peace the Nordenfjord World University in Denmark will host a World Congress from June 8 - 15, 1986 in Thy, Denmark. The theme of the congress will be: "Youth & Age - Visions & Dreams", a theme taken from a quotation from ancient scripture "youth shall have visions, and old shall dream dreams".

DEUTSCHE DEMOKRATISCHE REPUBLIC (DDR) - (epd)

Berlin - Junge Christen in der DDR im Alter zwischen 16 und 25 Jahren werden gegenwärtig vom Bonhoeffer-Komitee der DDR-Kirchen eingeladen, sich an einem Gespräch über die Herausforderung des christlichen Glaubens heute und morgen zu beteiligen. Wer dazu bereit ist, erhält ein Heft mit Texten des 1945 im KZ Flossenburg ermordeten evangelischen Theologen Dietrich Bonhoeffer und wird gebeten, eine Ausarbeitung zum Thema "Es gibt keinen Frieden ohne Gerechtigkeit und Wahrheit" einzureichen.

FRANCE

"Free to Live" was the main theme of the 17th General Meeting of the Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe (EYCE), which was held in Sète, France from October 12 - 19, 1985 at the invitation of the Protestant Federation of France. The meeting devoted considerable attention to the question of a correct conception of freedom and liberation, which includes, amongst other things, saving the sacred gift of life.

HUNGARY

Considering that artistic expression, with its power of conviction and mass influence, can be a powerful weapon in the hand of our movement for peace, the World Federation of Democratic Youth calls on all young artists, arts students, young photographers and all amateur artists to participate in the International Competition "THERE MUST BE PEACE ON EARTH", organized by the WFDY and its magazine "World Youth". Entries will be judged by an international jury with its headquarters in Budapest. All entries arriving by August 31, 1986, at the following address will be entered in the competition: World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY), 1389 Budapest, P.O.B. 147, Hungary.

INDIA

The International Youth Year was celebrated by the Young Men's Christian Association, Jeypore, India on December 15, 1985 under the theme "Participation, Development and Peace". More than 500 young people participated in this celebration. Youth were urged to render their services to the society in a meaningful way.

NIGERIA

A series of youth workshops were organized by the Institute of Church and Society/International Year of Youth Seminar during 1985 with the theme: "Peace, Participation and Spiritual Development" in line with the U.N. theme. The dates and venues of the seminars were:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Western Zone - Ibadan | 23 - 26 May, 1985 |
| 2. Northern Zone - Jos | 27 - 29 June, 1985 |
| 3. Eastern Zone - Umuahia | 25 - 28 July, 1985. |

Some of the topics discussed were: Career Guidance, Love/Courtship/Marriage, Drug Addiction, Communication, Youth and the Church.

OESTERREICH - (KIPA)

Wien, 31. Januar, 1986 - Der ökumenische Jugendrat in Oesterreich hat sich bei seiner jüngsten Sitzung für die Abhaltung eines Friedenskonzils ausgesprochen. In einer am Freitag veröffentlichten Entschliessung werden die christlichen Kirchen von ihren Jugendorganisationen ersucht, ein "ökumenisches Konzil für Frieden, Gerechtigkeit und Bewahrung der Schöpfung" einzuberufen.

SWEDEN - (lwi 47/85)

Swedish singing group "Fjedur" carries anti-apartheid message

A Christian singing group from Sweden has gained a following in the United States and Europe for its songs carrying messages of the struggles of black people in South Africa under apartheid, the policy of racial segregation. "People who would not be interested in a speech against apartheid can get very interested through our songs and workshops, said Anders Nyberg, leader of the group, during a recent visit to the United States. The turning point for this seven-member group came in 1978 when the Swedish Church Mission offered to sponsor them on a tour of South Africa. Fjedur also sang at the 1984 LWF Youth Gathering in Budapest, Hungary.

TAIWAN - (KIPA)

The International Youth Year in Taiwan: final report

Taichung, December 2 - About 2,500 Catholic young people celebrated the IYY on November 30/December 1, 1985 with prayers at night, talking, games and dance, theatre and singing and with the holy eucharist. The event took place in the "Stella matutina" girl's school in Taichung. In different discussions the young people of ages 13 - 30 expressed their courage and their anger; they mainly criticized the adult's anachronistic image of God, but politics and society-structures were hardly mentioned.

UdSSR

UdSSR und Europa sollen Schüler und Studenten austauschen

Regensburg (epd) - Der im Abschlusskommuniqué des Genfer Gipfels vereinbarte Austausch von Studenten und Schülern zwischen der UdSSR und den USA sollte auch zwischen der Sowjetunion und europäischen Ländern erfolgen. Das regte der Presseattaché der Sowjetischen Botschaft in Bonn, Andrej Serhagin, bei einer Diskussion in Regensburg an. "Wenn die Völker mehr über einander wissen", so begründete Serhagin seinen Vorschlag, "können falsche Begriffe und veraltete Feindbilder sehr rasch abgebaut werden".

USA - (ALC News)

Minneapolis -- A major youth gathering in the summer of 1988 was approved by the Transition Team involved in the formation of the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The Rev. Daryl D. Koenig, executive director of Luther League in the American Lutheran Church (ALC) has been appointed event coordinator. Up to 25,000 youth of the new Lutheran church may be able to register for the 1988 event, according to Koenig.

USA - (Lutheran youth & World Hunger)

LIFE, a break dance performance, was given by the youth group of Fordham Lutheran Church, the Bronx, New York, on March 31, 1985 to raise funds for world hunger. The program featured dance routines which had been worked out by the youth based on biblical texts. LIFE stands for Love Is Feeding Ethiopia. Original dance routines were performed by 30 dancers in the church sanctuary. The break dances depicted "Creation and the Fall of Man", "The Prodigal Son", "Feeding the Hungry".
